Diocese of Southern Ohio

Bishop Kristins Uffelman White

Visitation Customary

Dear Friends,

Pastoral visits to the parishes and worshipping communities in the Diocese of Southern Ohio provide some of the greatest opportunities I have to be with you, and to get to know the people who comprise the Body of Christ that is the Church. I look forward to these visits with joy.

I trust that my visit to your congregation will be something you consider both a regular event and a special occasion in the life of the church. In preparation, here are some guidelines to shape the time I will share with your community during our visitation.

Two Weeks Prior To My Visit

Please email the following items to Sarah Beegle, my executive assistant (sbeegle@diosohio.org):

1. The worship bulletin for all services
2. The completed visitation form Sarah sent to you in advance of the visitation, including the names of those who will be baptized, confirmed, received, or who will renew their baptismal vows during the visitation.
3. Your most recent Annual Report, or the minutes from your most recent Annual Meeting
4. Your end of year financials from the previous year
5. Your budget for the current year
6. The last 2-3 months of vestry minutes
7. The best contact number for me to reach out on the day of the visitation

During The Visitation

Worship

Please plan for your regular Sunday morning worship schedule and ensure that my office has the correct times. I am glad to preach and preside at multiple services.

If there will be baptisms, confirmations, receptions, or people renewing their baptismal vows, please plan for me to meet with those who will be receiving the rites of initiation and with their sponsors prior to the service.

Please plan for 30-45 minutes for this meeting, and ensure that my executive assistant has this information in preparation for my visit. I will plan to arrive 30 minutes prior to the meeting with candidates or the start of the first service.

Please note that I have celiac disease, which means I am allergic to gluten. I am able to handle and distribute regular wafer or bread, but not to consume it. Please provide a gluten-free wafer or gluten-free bread for me for the Eucharist. My husband John is gluten-intolerant. If he is traveling with me, John will need a gluten-free wafer as well.

If ablutions following communion are a part of your congregation's practice, other members of the altar party should attend to those at the credence table rather than the altar.

If there are baptisms, vestment colors should be white. If there are no baptisms, vestment colors are seasonal.

The Revised Common Lectionary (Episcopal Edition) is the standard for the Diocese of Southern Ohio. Please use the Propers of the Day, including all three readings and the Psalm. When there are choices between readings, I prefer to follow the track that is in regular use at your parish. If your congregation has reason to propose a departure from the standard readings, please contact Sarah Beegle with this request at least two weeks prior to the visitation.

I anticipate that a member of the clergy or a leader from the congregation will offer the announcements, and the acolytes, lay readers, and chalice bearers will service at worship as they are regularly accustomed to doing. The respective orders of ministry should participate in their various roles in the service, with lay people reading the first two lessons, as well as the Psalms, if it is not sung. When present, a deacon should read the gospel, invite the confession of sin, prepare the altar, and offer the dismissal. If there are no baptisms, confirmations, or receptions, the liturgy for my visitation may include the renewal of baptismal vows. If a deacon is not present, a priest may read the gospel, prepare the altar, and offer the dismissal. In that circumstance, I will bid the confession.

I will celebrate and preach.

When possible, a deacon will assist me in worship. I will often have a member of my staff traveling with me, and may invite that staff member to serve as my chaplain during the liturgy.

Please discuss beforehand and liturgical practices that you would like to incorporate as part of the visitation that fall outside of baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist. I am willing to consider, for instance, a special blessing, but I need to know about it prior to the visitation.

As noted above, I have celiac disease and must have a gluten-free wafer for my own consumption. I am able to handle and distribute wafers or bread containing wheat. I prefer the

use of a large priest's host for the celebration of the Eucharist, along with a single chalice on the table, in accordance with the rubrical intent of the Prayer Book rites. The communion of the people should be from the elements consecrated at the Eucharist and not from the reserved sacrament. If the elements are depleted, additional bread or wine may be consecrated as needed.

AFTER WORSHIP

I look forward to spending time in conversation with members of the congregation, whether that means taking part in coffee hour or joining in a reception. Alternately, I would be glad to lead a time of more structured discussion, either by responding to questions from the parish or by presenting on a particular topic that may be helpful to the life of the congregation. I am particularly eager to share brief congregational development teachings followed by discussion.

MEETING WITH THE VESTRY OF MISSION COUNCIL

I anticipate meeting with the vestry or mission council for about an hour during my visitation. This meeting may take place before worship, or after the congregational coffee hour.

This is a special meeting of the parish leadership and should not include matters of regular business. Instead, it is an opportunity for you to ask questions of me, and for us to share in discussion about what I have learned from your materials and during my time with you. I especially look forward to hearing about your ministries within your local community, learning about your dreams and frustrations, and discovering more about how you are striving to embody Jesus' love to the world.

AFTER MY VISIT

Please share any questions or requests with Sarah Beegle. Sarah will ensure that your questions are addressed to the corresponding leader or member of diocesan staff.

FINALLY

If you need to contact me the day of my visit, you can reach me by call or text at my cell number: 513-220-2296. I so look forward to being with you and your community.

In Christ,

The Right Reverend Kristin Uffelman White
10th Bishop of the Diocese of Southern Ohio

BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION

Our Prayer Book names the bishop's visitation among the five occasions especially fitting for baptism. Following the shape of this ancient practice, I will plan to preside over the rite, sharing its administration with all the orders present. So, I will ask for the presentations of those to be baptized and ask the various questions of the candidates, sponsors, and congregation. I will also bless the water, and I will offer the post-baptismal prayers and anoint the newly baptized. A deacon or layperson should lead the prayers for the candidates. A priest or deacon should administer the water rite.

Whenever the bishop is present, the Prayer Book provides for the ministration of baptism and confirmation in one liturgy, using the rite which begins on page 299. If there are confirmations but no baptism, then the rite is the one beginning on Page 413.

When there are baptisms and confirmation, after the sermon is finished, we will continue with the examination of the candidates. It may be helpful to include a hymn as candidates make their way to the chancel steps or wherever the examination will take place. There is no need to move a chair to the steps, as I will stand throughout this part of the liturgy.

When there is a baptism, I will read the thanksgiving over the water; the priest administers the water of baptism. As each candidate is baptized, I will seal each candidate with chrism. When an adult is baptized, this suffices for confirmation as well. Adult baptizands should not be presented again, but may be given a confirmation certificate as well as a baptismal certificate.

After being welcomed by the congregation, the newly baptized return to their seats. At that point, the other candidates for confirmation, reception and reaffirmation then come before me one at a time for the laying on of hands (please include a card or name with each person's first name, pronouns, and an indication of whether they are being confirmed/received/renewing their baptismal vows. Directions for this portion of the liturgy should be discussed in advance).

When all have been presented, the peace is then exchanged. Prayers of the people are omitted.

My office will prepare certificates prior to the liturgy. Please be sure to include the names of all candidates being baptized, confirmed or received in the visitation form and send to Sarah Beegle at sbeegle@diosohio.org at least two weeks prior to the visitation.